





THE TRUE
HISTORY
AND
ADVENTURES
OF

Catharine Vizzani,

A YOUNG

Gentlewoman a Native of *Rome*, who for many Years past in the Habit of a Man; was killed for an Amour with a young Lady; and found on Dissection, a true Virgin.

With curious Anatomical REMARKS on the *Nature* and *Existence* of the HYMEN.

By GIOVANNI BIANCHI, Professor of Anatomy at *Sienna*, the Surgeon who dissected her.

With a curious FRONTISPIECE.

What odd fantastic Things, we Women do!

Ep. to CATO.

L O N D O N:

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(Price One Shilling.)

THE TRUE HISTORY AND ADVENTURES



Catharine Nicot A YOUNG

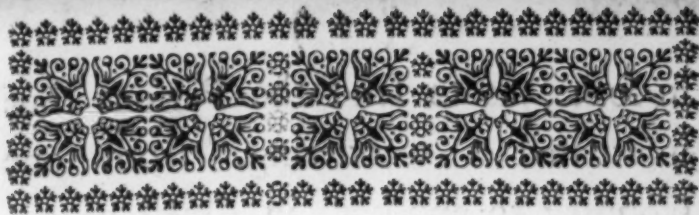
Gentlewoman a Native of France, who for
many Years past in the Habit of a Nun; was
killed for an Adultery with a young Lady; and found
on Dissection, a true Virgin.
With curious Anatomical Remarks on the Nerves
and Arteries of the Liver.

By GIOVANNI BATTISTA WILKES, Professor of
Anatomy at Gresham, the Surgeon who dissected her.

With a curious Account of the

It was all found in France, 1752.

Printed for W. LARSEN, at the
at the Sign of the Gun, 1752.
(Price One Shilling.)



A S H O R T
A C C O U N T

O F

Catherine Vizzani, &c.

 L L our Passions are known
to break out into very extra-
vagant Sallies, but Love
seems of all to be the most
exorbitant; so that no one, read in the
History of human Nature, will won-
der, that a bare Report should ever
have kindled such an ardent Affection

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in some, as to send the Persons thus infatuated a wandering, from one Country to another, in Quest of the desired Object ; or that others have preferred the Gratification of their Love to Duty and Decency, to Tranquillity and Reputation. The Subject before me is an Instance, that the Wantonness of Fancy, and the Depravity of Nature, are at as great a Height as ever ; and that our Times afford a Girl, who, so far from being inferior to *Sappho*, or any of the *Lesbian* Nymphs, in an Attachment for those of her own Sex, has greatly surpassed them in Fatigues, Dangers, and Distress, which terminated in a violent Death. This the following Narrative will manifest, which is a pregnant Example of the shocking Ebullition of human Passions, yet, at the same Time,



Time, of a most firm Constancy and Daringness in a young Creature, tho' with a sad Alloy of Guilt and Precipitancy.

Our unfortunate Adventurer's Name was *Catherine Vizzani*; she was born at *Rome*, and of ordinary Parentage, her Father being a Carpenter. When she came to her fourteenth Year, the Age of Love in our forward Climate, she was reserved and shy towards young Men, but would be continually romping with her own Sex, and some she caressed with all the Eagerness and Transport of a Male Lover; but, above all, she was passionately enamoured with one *Margaret*, whose Company she used to court, under Pretence of learning Embroidery; and, not satisfied with these Interviews by

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Day,

Day, scarce a Night passed, but she appeared in Man's Cloaths, under her Charmer's Window ; though, in all Appearance, her Pleasure must be limited to the viewing *Margaret's* captivating Charms, and saying soft Things to her. This whimsical Amour went on very quietly for above two Years, but at last *Catherine* being surprized by *Margaret's* Father, just when her Heart was overflowing with fervid Expressions of Love to his Daughter, he rattled her severely, and threatened that the Governor of the City should hear of her Pranks. *Catherine* was so frightened with Menaces of such a Nature, that she absconded, and went to *Viterbo*, in a Man's Disguise, where she took upon herself the Name of *Giovanni Bordoni*. After continuing here till she imagined the Noise of her

her Gallantry was blown over, and she was at the Bottom of her Purse, which at first had not been too full to tie; she ventured to return to *Rome*, not to her Father's House, but taking Sanctuary, as an unfortunate young Man, in the Church of *Santa Maria*, in *Transtevere*. Being perceived in the Evening, by a Canon of that Church, whose Name was *Giuseppe Lancisi*, and his Curiosity being whetted by this sham Youth's endeavouring to sculk, he made up to her, and asked her what she meant by such a suspicious Behaviour? To whom our Adventurer timorously answered, that she was far from any bad Design; it was only to avoid the Revenge which had been vowed against her for a little Fault on account of a Sweetheart. The Canon, taken with *Gio-*
vanni's

vanni's modest Deportment, compassionately answered, that he should be welcome to the Protection of his House which joined to the Church, and there he would be out of the Way of the merciless Officers. During this Concealment, a Country Gentleman of *Perugia* came upon a Visit to the Canon's House, who, wanting a Servant, and seeing *Giovanni* a genteel young Fellow, made her good Offers, which she was very ready to embrace; and at her Departure told the Canon that she was Son to one *Peter Vizzani*, a Carpenter, who had removed to *Rome* from the *Milaneſe*. Whatever was the Matter, *Giovanni* quickly grew out of Fancy with her Service, and in a Letter to her Mother, containing her whole History, she acquainted her, that, for some particular and good Reasons, she should

should chuse to live at *Arezzo* above
 any other Place, and desired her to
 wait upon the above-mentioned Canon,
 to obtain for her a Letter of Recom-
 mendation to his Brother, a Captain
 at that City. The fond Mother, upon
 the Receipt of her fugitive Daughter's
 Letter, made but one Step of it to the
 Canon's House, and, without the least
 Intimation of *Giovanni's* Sex, urged
 the Request, so that she got her recom-
 mended to the Captain at *Arezzo*; yet
 here Matters were so cross, that neither
 her Patron's Interest, nor her own Per-
 son, could procure her a Service; so,
 after losing a Month there, the Captain
 sent her away to his Brother *Bartho-*
lomew, who was settled at *San Sepolcro*,
 with whom she had better Fortune,
 getting soon after to be Body-Foot-
 man to Signor *Francis Maria Pucci* of
Monte

Monte Pulciano, who at that Time was Governor, or Vicar (as the *Tuscan* Stile is) of *Angiari*. Never was Gentleman better fitted with a Servant than the Vicar with *Giovanni*; for, besides Reading, making of Chocolate, and Cookery, she was very dextrous at Pen, Comb, and Razor; in a Word, she was a thorough Proficient in all the Branches of her Employment. The Governor, however, being an austere Man, who made no Allowance for the Impulses of Nature, or the Feror of Youth, was used not to spare her, for incessantly following the Wenches, and being so barefaced and insatiable in her Amours. She had Recourse to several delusive Impudicities, not only to establish the Certainty, but raise the Reputation of her Manhood. (The Doctor enters into a
nauseous

nauseous Detail of her Impostures, which is the more inexcusable, they not being essential to the main Scope of the Narrative. These, if agreeable to the *Italian Goût*, would shock the Delicacy of our Nation, with whom I hope the following Lines will ever be in full Force, as the Standard of Criticism :

*Immodest Words admit of no Defence ;
And Want of Decency is Want of Sense.*

Though a Veil be drawn over such Ordures, yet as *Giovanni's* Artifices cannot be one and all concealed, without an Infraction of the Laws of History ; and would, besides, occasion too great a Chasm in a Translation ; I return to the Original, with saying, that she was two several Times with

a Surgeon in that District, to buy Medicaments for the Removal of Disorders, which she pretended to have contracted from infectious Women, being but a raw Soldier in the Wars of *Venus* ; to obviate any Suspicions which her Laundress might at certain Times harbour, she told her, that it some Way or other, having taken Air, that Nature had been very liberal to him, the Girls teased him out of his very Life, but that some of them had very ill rewarded his Compliance ; that, however, he hoped, by the Care of the good Doctor, and his own Discretion, quickly to get clear of their Present, and that he would be more upon his Guard for the future ; adding (as she knew that a Prohibition is with most People an Incentive) a strict Charge to the Laundress, that she

should

should not betray his Confidence by dropping the least Hint, in any Place, either of his Abilities or Distemper. Her Fetches succeeded far beyond her Desert, that is, to the very Height of her Expectation; so that, within a short Time, it was whispered about that *Giovanni* was the best Woman's Man, and the most addicted to that alluring Sex of all the Men in that Part of the Country. However, this Character, the Acquirement of which had cost her so many Artifices, and in which she hugged herself with such Pride and Delight, was near proving fatal to her; for, being passionately enamoured with a Girl, whose singular Beauty attracted numerous Adorers, one of her Rivals apprehending she would bear away the Prize, in a Fit of Rage at seeing her use some Endear-

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ments

ments with the beloved Object, which were permitted without so much as any Feint of Repulse, drew upon her, and gave her a very deep Wound in the Neck. The Governor, who, being in Years, seemed to have outlived all Remembrance of the Effervescencies of that Passion, especially with a little Encouragement, was at first more incensed against his Servant, than troubled at the Danger of his Wound ; he sent away a Letter full of heavy Complaints to the Canon at *Rome*, that a Person of his sacred Function should grant his Recommendation, and that expressed in the most unexceptionable Terms, to a young Vagabond, and the most abandoned Whoremaster that ever seduced Woman. The Canon, being a Person of unblemished Sanctity, but so ready to all Acts of Kindness,

ness, as sometimes to overlook the proper Cautions, immediately dispatched a Servant to the Carpenter, *Giovanni's* Father, to come to his House without Delay. He began, with the most serious Concern, to lay open to him the Particulars of his Son's scandalous Dissoluteness, charging it upon the Want of timely Instruction and Chastisement, if not the Influence of a vicious Example. The Carpenter, who could hardly keep his Countenance during a Remonstrance delivered with a dictatorial Solemnity, calmly answered, that, to his and his dear Wife's inexpressible Grief, their Son was a Prodigy of Nature, and that, in his very Childhood, they had observed some astonishing Motions of Lust, which had unhappily gathered Vehemence with the Growth of his Body ;

Body ; that, however, since such was the Case, and the Vigour of his Constitution was not to be repressed by Words or Blows, Nature must e'en take its Course ; and, as for the vicious Example you are pleased to insinuate, I hope I am no worse than my Neighbours. I must tell you, Master Carpenter, replied the Ecclesiastic a little moved, that you are in the Wrong, ay, and very much so, to offer to extenuate your Son's Enormities, chiefly, as they are an Offence to the God of Holiness, and, as such, may plunge the Youth into Misery inexpressible, and without End ; but also, which is not beneath Consideration, they reflect a Dishonour on you, as his Parent, his Guide, and Instructor ; and on me, who, too easily inferring the Goodness of his Morals from his ingenuous

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Countenance and decent Carriage, recommended him in Terms, as if he was not to be over-praised. The Father, perceiving the Canon to grow warm upon the Matter, put a Stop to his Expostulation, saying, with a Smile, Reverend Sir, certainly you have few Equals in Christian Zeal, but I must undeceive you, and ask Pardon for not doing it before: This same Child of mine, whose Irregularities have made such a Noise, is no Male, but as truly, in all Respects, a Female, as the Woman who bore her; he then proceeded to relate the Occasion of her leaving her Home, and rambling in a Man's Habit. The good Canon was amazed at such frantic Doings, and courteously dismissed the Carpenter; however, judging that the Governor's Letter was in a Stile too lofty and a-

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crimonious, to be used to a Dignitary, he did not vouchsafe to answer it, nor made any other Use of the authentic Information given him of *Giovanni's* genuine Sex. This Wound, though not fatal, made *Giovanni* suffer a great deal, especially in her Purse ; for, as she drew it upon herself by the Licentiousness of her Amours, her Master told her he would not in the least concern himself in the Charge of the Cure, but as he brewed so must he bake. The Vicar, however, whilst *Giovanni* was under the Surgeon's Hands, had been put to great Inconveniency, as nothing came amiss to her ; that he chose to bear with her Debaucheries, rather than deprive himself of a Domestic of such general Use, and tried Probity ; accordingly *Giovanni* continued with him betwixt
three

three or four Years afterwards, and, in all Appearance, to their mutual Satisfaction, the Governor never failing to take him in Company, whenever he visited his Estate at *Monte Pulciano*, till (whether it was from Whim, Disgust, or some new Scheme) she abruptly desired and obtained her Discharge. She hired herself next to *Giannozzo de Capparello*, who at that Time was Commissary or Governor of that Place ; but, having enough of this Service in a few Months, she went and made her Submissions to the Vicar of *Anghiari*, who, partly out of Goodnature, and partly out of Regard to her universal Qualifications, received her again into his Family, but with many grave Admonitions to a more regular Behaviour ; her Master, being soon after preferred to the Podestateship of

Librafratta, took her thither, and often in his little Jaunts to *Monte Pulciano*, *Florence*, and other Places; tho' he mostly kept him in full Employment at *Librafratta*, to put a Stop to some Broils which were beginning to break out at his Seat at *Monte Pulciano*, on Occasion of *Giovanni's* amorous Pursuits, for they were not in any wise abated; whether Nature were actually uncontrollable, or Gratitude had not its proper Weight, or she was hardened against Pain, Infamy, or any other Consequence. She some Time after, at that Place, was brought into a dangerous Plunge by her intriguing Effrontery. In all her several Journeys with her Master, she never made the least Difficulty to lie in the same Bed with other Men, upon a Case of Necessity; but also forbore making
any

any Advances to her Bedfellow, though he were an *Adonis*. It is now about two Years ago, that, attending upon the Podesta and his Son *Antony*, Lord of *Santo Stephano* at *Florence*, during their whole Stay there, which was near two Months, *Giovanni* was obliged to take Part in the same Bed, with the two other Servants, wanton young Fellows, whom they had taken along with them in that Journey, and without any Discovery to her Prejudice ; at which Time, being upon a Visit to a Kinsman, during our Vacation, I happened to put up at the very same Inn ; and, one of their Servants having been sent away Express, my Servant, apprehending that he might disturb me, by coming into the Chamber, where I had, some Hours before, retired to sleep, betook himself to supply the Place of

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the Podesta's absent Servant. Not a single Day passed, during my Stay here, but I was sure to be entertained with a brawling Dialogue betwixt the Podesta and *Giovanni*, on Account of the latter's being more free in his Gallantries to the Daughter of the House than became one who wore a Livery; and especially, said the supercilious Podesta, the Servant of a Man placed in such Authority as I am, to superintend the Observance of the Laws, to preserve good Order, and punish Irregularities. After an honourable Issue of the Affair, which had brought the Podesta to *Florence*, he returned to *Librafratta*. Here *Giovanni* gave a more audacious Loose to his unnatural Desires, his Master's Presence being frequently required at *Monte Pulciano*, and other Places, whilst the Care of the House

was

was committed to *Giovanni*, who, amidst all her Licentiousness, was never known, in the least, to have offended, in Point of Vigilance and Honesty : Among other Charmers, he had the Presumption to offer his Addresses to a very lovely young Gentlewoman, Niece to the Minister of the Village ; and prosecuted them with such Ardour and Success, that they both grew passionately in Love with each other. The Uncle, knowing the Temptation of Beauty, and the Lubricity of Youth, kept a strict Guard over his Niece, till an advantageous Match, which was in Agitation, should be concluded ; but *Giovanni's* Person and Blandishments preponderated against all other Considerations ; and, after eluding the Uncle's Attention, in several Midnight Interviews, *Giovanni* proposed to the
young

young Lady to carry her off at an appointed Time, and that afterwards they should make for *Rome*; where, by Means of an honest Priest of his Acquaintance, their Passion should be confirmed and sanctified by the Offices of the Church: This Overture was not only agreed to, but applauded as the greatest Mark both of his Love and Virtue. To carry this Scheme into Execution, *Giovanni* had provided two Horses, on which they were to set out very early one Morning about the Middle of *June*, in the Year One Thousand, Seven Hundred, and Forty Three. The Evening before this important Expedition, *Giovanni's* Mistress, her Discretion not being equal to her Beauty, took her younger Sister a-part, and told her, that her Uncle's rigid Humours had now worn out her Patience;

tience ; that she had determined not
 to be mew'd up at that Rate any
 longer ; and that *Giovanni*, who would
 do any Thing for her, was to be her
 Deliverer, having provided two Horses
 against the Dawn of Day, on which
 they were to post away to *Lucca*, and
 from thence to *Rome*, where they were
 to be married. This mettlesome Girl
 commended the Project to the Skies ;
 but added, that she also, having long
 been tired of living with such an old
 Cuff, would take this charming Op-
 portunity of freeing herself from him,
 and accompany her in an Adventure,
 which carried so much Spirit with it.
 The Elder, too late sensible of her In-
 discretion, conjured her not to harbour
 any such Thought, as being her Un-
 cle's Favourite, and having good Ex-
 pectations from him ; but the Younger
 being

being one of those, who what they will, they will unalterably, was not to be cajoled, and flatly told her Sister, that, if she made any farther Difficulties against her being one of the Party, their Uncle should hear of it before he slept, and then, where is your Journey to *Rome*? This so stunned the Lady-errant, that she had not a Word to say for some Time; and after a Pause, changing the Key, said she would open the Matter to *Giovanni*, who, she hoped, would agree to what she seemed so bent upon. *Giovanni* was too much taken up with the Thoughts of the approaching Exploit to give Way to Sleep, and was upon the Spot before the Time, where he found *Maria*; for Love having kept *Maria* not less wakeful, and her Sollicitude about her Sister suggesting to her

her that every Moment was precious ; she immediately informed him of her Sister's Determination, and the Consequences of a Refusal. *Giovanni*, who had Complaisance, without Reserve, for the youthful Females, very cheerfully answered, Aye, with all my Heart ; it were Pity a Girl of so much Mercury should stay behind ; so, mounting them both upon the two Horses, she put herself to the Fatigue of accompanying them on Foot. Their first Rout was to *Lucca*, which lies at no great Distance from *Librafratta*, but making a Circuit to avoid *Pisa*, where her two Fellow-Travellers had a general Acquaintance ; before their short Refreshment at *Lucca* was ended, *Giovanni*, who was used to Dispatch, had provided a Chaise ready at the Door, into which she hurried the

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two Nieces, whilst she contentedly placed herself in her common Post behind. With this Vehicle these three Adventurers proceeded towards *Sienna*, but with more Haste than good Speed; for, at a Place called *Il Pocchetto*, a few Miles from *Sienna*, whether by the Weight of three Persons, or that the Calash itself was old and crazy, whatever was the Cause, it broke down, to the unspeakable Consternation of the Fare; but *Giovanni*, an expert Traveller, quickly got it mended, and away they drove to retrieve the Delay. Having seen these unfortunate Creatures so far in their Way, let us return to the Priest, Uncle to *Maria* and *Priscilla*. Upon missing his Nieces, it must be thought that he flew into a violent Rage, which yet he could vent only in Words; but being informed,
that

that they had been seen on the *Lucca* Road, in Company with *Giovanni*, he instantly dispatched away his Chaplain, a young Blade, who was *tam Marte quam Mercurio*, assisted by two Servants of the Podesta, with a Promise of suitable Rewards, if they brought back his Nieces, and secured *Giovanni*, in order to his being made an Example for his audacious Villainy, in imposing on the Credulity of Girls of a reputable Family, to seduce them from their Wardship. On this Pursuit they posted away to *Lucca*, which the Fugitives had left, long before their Arrival. However, having Intelligence that such a Company had taken the *Sienna* Road, they, without so much as Baiting, spurred on, being animated by the Scent they had gotten; and as the Refreshment at *Lucca*

had taken up some Time, and the Repairing the broken Calash at *Poghetto* a great deal more, they came up with their Chace at *Staggia*. The Chaplain, to make short Work of it, called out to the Servants to fire upon *Giovanni*, who, having perceived them at some Distance, had leaped down from behind the Calash. The Servants, pursuant to their Leader's Command, presented their Pieces at *Giovanni*, who having a masculine Spirit, as well as masculine Desires, not at all daunted at such a threatening Sight, drew a Pistol which hung at her Belt, and presented it towards the Chaplain. This unexpected Resolution put them to a Stand, and both Sides continued watching each other's Motions, whilst the poor Girls were shrieking, and wringing their Hands ; 'till *Giovanni*,

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considering that her Sex would secure her from any very bad Consequence of this Affair, and that one Girl's running away with two others might, in a Court of Justice, if it should go that Length, be slightly passed over as a Frolick, rather than severely animadverted upon as a Crime, thought it adviseable to surrender ; and, turning contemptuously from the commanding Officer to the Servants, who were known to her, she delivered up her Pistol, telling them they were welcome to do their Office. The Chaplain, however, irritated at her Petulance, if Jealousy or Avarice were not rather the Motives to such an Inhumanity, after her Submission, stormed at one of the Servants, whose Name was *Miniato*, for not firing, and threatened him with an Oar in the Gallies, if he

he delayed a Moment ; whereupon he let fly, aiming at *Giovanni's* Thighs, upon a Supposition that a Wound in those Parts would be the least hurtful, and hit the poor Creature in the left Thigh, four Inches above the Knee ; the same Shot killing a fine Pointer of the Podesta's, and fracturing a Leg of a Boy of about twelve Years of Age, who happening to come by, had stopt, as it was very natural, to see what was the Matter. The Chaplain, as Chief of the Expedition, was not wanting to spread his Success in every Place through which he conducted his fair Captives, on their Return to their Uncle, who, to prevent another Elopement, went to *Lucca*, and initiated them into a Conservatory of recluse Ladies. As for *Giovanni*, who had fallen to the Ground with Pain and

Loss

Loss of Blood, and the wounded Boy, they were, by the Compassion of the Country Folks, conveyed to the Hospital of *Poggibonfi*, from whence, their Case being dangerous, they were, within a short Space, removed to our Hospital *della Scala*. *Giovanni's* Youth, Dejection, and Docility had so endeared her to the Curate of *Poggibonfi*, that he recommended her to several Persons of Credit at *Sienna*; and she, on her Part, committed some Things to his Care, which, if her Wound should prove her Death, were to be his, as an Acknowledgment of his so seasonable Kindness, and a Recompence for his Prayers, which she, with a Flood of Tears, requested. Besides this, *Paolo Marchi*, a Regular of distinguished Piety, wrote a very affectionate Letter, in his Behalf, to *Maria*
 Co-

Colomba, Purveyor to the Nuns of the Order of the immaculate Conception of the ever Blessed Virgin at *Sienna*. Accordingly *Giovanni* arrived at the Hospital *della Scala* on the Sixteenth of *June*, One Thousand, Seven Hundred, and Forty-three, and was laid in the seventieth Bed, being entered in the Register of the Patients, from his own Mouth, by the Name of *Giovanni*, Son of *Francisco Bordon*, Freeman of *Rome*, and aged Twenty-four Years. Here I must observe with Pleasure, as an Instance of the Candour and Humanity of my Countrymen, that, of all to whom the unfortunate *Giovanni* sent the recommendatory Letters, not one failed to come, or send, with the most liberal Offers of Assistance; among the rest, *Maria Colomba* shewed a most vivid Spirit of Christianity, by which

which she adds a Lustre to her religious Employment. My Servant, *Giambattista Giustiniani*, hearing of such a Patient, was led, by Curiosity, to go and have a Sight of him, imagining he might know him, being of the same Class.

It is no Wonder that he called *Giovanni* to Mind, upon Sight, having been quartered in the same Inn for above forty Days, and Bed-fellows the greatest Part of that Time. Upon my coming Home in the Evening, *Giambattista* informed me that *Giovanni*, the Podesta *Pucci*'s roguish Servant, lay ill in the Hospital of a Wound, and desired, above all things, that I would be so good as to come and see him ; which I promised with an Intention of performing, but, as he

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had been wanting to fet forth the Place and Nature of the Wound, I judged it to be some slight Matter which required no Haste ; thus, I own, my Promise slipt my Remembrance, and the sooner, as my Man never so much as once, after his first Information, reminded me of it. In the mean Time *Giovanni's* Wound grew extremely painful, and brought a high Fever upon her, which was also accompanied with a Difficulty of Respiration, occasioned by an Accretion of the *Pus*, or Humours about her Breast ; from such a Conjunction of Symptoms, her Recovery was apprehended to be doubtful ; in this Extremity, a leathern Contrivance, of a cilindrical Figure, which was fastened below the Abdomen, and had been the chief Instrument of her detestable Imposture,

sture, became so troublesome, that she loosened it, and laid it under her Pillow; and now, brought to a Sense of the Heinousness of her Courses, she disclosed her Secret to the charitable *Maria de Colomba*, who suffered not a Day to pass without bringing or sending her some Cordials. She told her that she was not only a Female but a Virgin, conjuring her, at the same Time, to let no Person whatever know it till her Death, and then to declare it publickly, that she might be buried in a Woman's Habit, and with the Garland on her Head, an honorary Ceremony observed among us in the Burial of Virgins. She breathed her last, a few Days after this Confidence, in her twenty-fifth Year. Such was the End of this young Woman, after a Disguise of

above eight Years, during which she lived, undiscovered, as a Man Servant, in different Families; it is, indeed, a Proof of singular Address and Self-Government, that in such a length of Time, she should preserve her Secret from Detection, and be Proof against any Inclination or Love for a Man, though living continually in the utmost Freedom with them, and often lying in the same Bed; a Passion universally natural to young Women, and so vehement in it's Actings, as to violate the Institutes of a Cloister, or elope from the Coercion of Parents; but, on the other Hand, here was Effrontery and Folly in the Abstract, to fall in Love with those of her own Sex; to amuse them with passionate Addresses; to kindle in them Desires, without the Power of Gratification;

to

to mind neither Dangers nor Fatigues, and at last to lose her Life in these fantastical Pursuits. The leathern Machine, which was hid under the Pillow, fell into the Hands of the Surgeon's Mates in the Hospital, who immediately were for ripping it up, concluding that it contained Money, or something else of Value, but they found it stuffed only with old Rags: The Servants first suspected *Giovanni's* Sex, by her prominent Breasts, when they came to remove her Body from the Bed on which she died; and, making this known to the chief Mates, they not only discovered her to be a Woman, but also a Virgin, the Hymen being entire without the least Laceration. *Pietro Tfacchi*, a Native of *Aruzzo*, one of these Mates, and a Youth of great Hopes, came
to

to me very early on the Morning of the twenty-eighth of *June*, and told me with a Blush, that a Patient was dead, in the Hospital, of a Wound in the Thigh by a Musket-Ball, who, upon the Denudation of her Body, proved to be a Woman, with a fine found Hymen, and other Tokens of an untouched Virginity ; and that, if I would take the Trouble, my own Eyes would verify his Account. Such a Phænomenon incited my Curiosity, so that I set out with him ; but finding the Body of the deceased laid out in her proper Habit, with the Virginal Garland on her Head, and Flowers strewed all over her Cloaths, I deferred examining her till the Afternoon, when the Officers of Justice were to sit upon her, according to the established Custom,* when any one dies
of

of Wounds in the Hospital. Accordingly, taking along with me *James Berti*, my Dissector, and *Giambattista Giustiniani*, my Servant, we severally certified to the Town-Clerk, that we had seen her daily, for six Weeks successively, in a Man's Dress at *Florence*; but, proceeding to an Examination of her Body, it appeared that some of the younger Mates had made an Incision in her Belly, which they had sewed up again, and this to discover, forsooth, if she was not pregnant. As they had not meddled with the *Pudendum Muliebre*, nor the *Vagina* of the *Uterus*, the Entireness of the Hymen incontestably proved her being actually a Virgin. Upon inspecting the Wound, I found it to be, as before-mentioned, about a Hand's Breadth above the Knee, and that the

the Musket-Ball had neither perforated nor fractured the Thigh Bone, but only made a square Hole in it, with a Fissure of its whole Length. The Body, being again cloathed in her funeral Vestment, was carried to the Church, where it was laid out, in Order to its Interment ; which being turbulently opposed by the Multitudes, which flocked, from all Parts of the City, to get a Sight of her, the Corpse was brought back, though chiefly in Deference to some Religious, who would have her to be nothing less than a Saint, having preserved her Chastity inviolate, amidst the strongest Temptations ; some of these also asserting, that she might be the Daughter of a *Venetian* Nobleman ; and, accordingly, an epistolary Account of her, dated at *Sienna*, the
first

first of *July*, and printed at *Florence*, places her in this honourable Light. These Reverend Gentlemen certainly took the Matter by a wrong Handle, a Woman's Sanctity not consisting only in preserving her Chastity inviolate, but in an uniform Purity of Manners, in which, how far *Catherine* excelled, is manifest from every preceding Line; accordingly, I urged that her making Love, and with uncommon Protervity, to Women, wherever she came, and her seducing at last two young Women to run away from their Uncle, were flagrant Instances of a libidinous Disposition; Proceedings incompatible with any virtuous Principle, or so much as Decency.

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But the Condition of this pretended young Man, and the Occasion of her Disguise, (both which were cleared up soon after, by Accounts from *Rome*) being at that Time unknown, it was the more advisable to comply with the People's Ferment.

About Nine o'Clock the next Morning, I went again to the Hospital, and caused an Incision to be made in the Body, and the Parts of Generation to be dissevered with the nicest Exactness, which were carried to my House to be thoroughly examined by a regular Dissection. I found, as has been before said, the Hymen to be entire, and of a circular Figure, like the Valves of the Intestines, or those Rings, called Diaphragms,

phragms, placed within Telescopes to reverberate the Rays of Light. This Hymen, with the approximate Parts, I have repositied among those which I found in many Virgins of different Age at *Sienna*. As for those which I dissected at *Arimino*, I left them behind; for that the Hymen is no Fancy, but actually found in all Virgin Females, is not controverted among experienced Anatomists; yet, as there are not wanting in some at *Sienna*, who sneer at such a Thing, let them only take a View of my Collection of these Membranes; and, if they will not stand out against ocular Evidence, they must own the Reality thereof. The *Clitoris* of this young Woman was not pendulous, nor of any extraordinary Size, as the Account from *Rome* made it, and as is said, to be that

of all those Females, who, among the *Greeks*, were called *Tribades*, or who followed the Practices of *Sappho*; on the contrary, her's was so far from any unusual Magnitude, that it was not to be ranked among the middle-sized, but the smaller. The left *Fallopian* Tube in her was three Times bigger than the right, which was of the proper Dimensions; it appeared as swelled and dried, and, both this, and the *Ovarium sinistrum*, were full of *Hydatides*, or minute *Vesiculæ*, containing an aqueous Matter.—All the other Parts of the *Abdomen* were in their natural State, and all flaccid; especially, I observed the *Valvula* of the *Colon* to be large, and quite closed. I examined afterwards a Piece of the Liver jointly with the Gall Bladder, which, after cleansing it from the Bile,

Bile, and dissecting it, I found, as I had in numberless Subjects before, that, towards the Neck, it had a Curvature, and that this Neck is not an even direct Tube, as it is misrepresented by all the Anatomists, except *Heister*; but that it twisted, like a small Cord, with several spiral *Valvulae* in the Inside, as I had, in Conformity to that great Man, mentioned, in another of my Writings, twenty Years ago; but I could not discern the *Cistipatic* and *Epatocistic* Tubes, as they are called; which was indeed my chief Motive to a narrow Inspection into these Parts, having frequently examined them before; but now they were brought afresh into my Mind, by reading the *Bolonian* Translation of *Winslow's* Anatomy, who possibly mentions it, on Trust, from Authors, who,

who, having met with them in Animals, have concluded them to be in Men also; but very probably they have all been too hasty. I do not deny that these Tubes have not, in Part, been discovered in Animals; I say, in Part, being, from my own Experience, convinced that the *Epatocistics* are in Oxen and Dogs, as I have never been able to distend their Gall Bladder jointly with the Neck, —the Air transpiring through these Tubes; but that the *Cistepatici* are not in any Liver whatsoever, is to me evident, because, did the Bile permeate from the Gall Bladder into the Liver, it would naturally communicate a bitter acrid Taste to it, which is the very Reverse of that of all Livers; this surely must preponderate against *Winslow*, and all those (be
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their Number ever so great) from whom he borrowed his Notion of those Tubes being in Men, and who should have known better, than from some particular Analogies to draw a general Inference; the Analogy fails in numberless Particulars, as, would not he be laughed at as a Smatterer in Anatomy, a mere *Sciolist*, who should argue that the Biliary Duct of the *Cisti* in Men is not tortuous, because in Animals it is direct?

In fine, as I see no extraordinary Title, Application excepted, the Name of *Winslow* has to the high Authority in which it stands, I confront against it that of *Ruisch*, who by all the learned World is allowed to have penetrated into the most hidden Secrets of Anatomy; that of
Heister,

Heister, and that of Signor *Morgagni*, who are all absolutely against him in this Point; to which I presume to add my own Experience, having a thousand Times, and with the most circumspect Attention, in vain sought for those Tubes in human Subjects; after all Disputes in Anatomy, experimental Philosophy, and other practical Sciences, are not to be decided by Words and Names, but by Facts and ocular Demonstration.

The Breast of this young Woman was also laid open, her Death being attributed more immediately to the Fever, and Congeries of Humours on her Breast, than to any other Cause; and, indeed, a large Quantity of yellowish *Pus* was lodged in the left Cavity of her Breast; there was
also

also a purulent Matter in the Right, but a great deal less in Quantity, and of a sanguine Colour. Her Lungs, on both Sides, were black, that being the usual Colour of the Intrails of such, who die of an Inflammation common to a Gangrene, or a *Sphacelus*.

At the same Time, I had a Desire of seeing the poor Lad, who, as is before related, had been a Fellow-Sufferer with this unhappy Creature; when, finding the *Tibia* and *Fibula* were fractured into very small Shivers a little above the Ankle, I gave him over for dead; which proved his Fate, within a few Weeks, by the Increase of the *Sanies* of the Wound, as I was informed at *Florence*, where an Affair had called me. I will not af-

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firm that a timely and proper Amputation might not have saved his Life ; but our *Italian* Surgeons, besides a Tendernefs of Disposition, lay a greater Strefs on the Virtue of Medicaments, than on the Adroitness of their Hands, though their Profession receives its Denomination from that Member * ; therefore it is no Wonder, that the *French* Surgeons, who act upon opposite Principles, should decry our Method, and reproach us, that the wounded Patients, which have died, by Inches, under our Physic and Plaisters, infinitely outnumber those which have had the good Fortune to be cured ; if yet, they are properly cured, who are deprived of the free Use of their Limbs, which is the Case of the Generality.

* *Χειρουργός, qui manibus operatur.*

REMARKS



REMARKS

Upon the Foregoing

DISSERTATION.



THE Wits, and even the learned Men of *Italy*, have been long distinguished for their Inclination to Discourses of this Nature, which are frequently interpreted in such a Manner as to do no great Honour to their Abilities, and still less to their Morals. But it may be they are, in this Respect, a little hardly treated; since, in a warm Country like theirs, where

Impurities of all Sorts are but too frequent, it may very well happen that such strange Accidents may, from Time to Time, arise as highly to excite both their Wonder and their Attention, rather from their Skill in Anatomy, and their Acquaintance with human Nature, than from any bad Habits or vitiated Inclinations in themselves.

As for the Case of this young Woman, it is certainly very extraordinary, and may therefore justify, at least in some Measure, the Pains which this learned and industrious Man has taken about her. But it does not appear that he has assigned any Cause whatever, or so much as advanced any probable Conjecture on this extravagant Turn of her Lewdness, notwithstanding it
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surprized him so much. Yet this we might reasonably have expected from a Treatise written by one of the Faculty, and one who, without any Scruple, professes that it had taken up so much of his Thoughts.

It should seem, that this irregular and violent Inclination, by which this Woman render'd herself infamous, must either proceed from some Error in Nature, or from some Disorder or Perversion in the Imagination. As to the first of these, the Author seems to have removed all Doubt ; since, from the Account he gives of the Dissection of the Body, it is very evident that there was nothing amiss ; and we have good Reason to believe, that he meant to insinuate so much at least to his Readers, by insisting so long upon a
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particular Circumstance. We ought, therefore, to acquit Nature of any Fault in this strange Creature, and to look for the Source of so odious and so unnatural a Vice, only in her Mind; and there, indeed, if closely attended to, it will be found that more monstrous Productions are to be met with than have exercised the Pens of such as have addicted themselves to write of strange Births, and such like Prodigious.

It seems therefore most likely that this unfortunate and scandalous Creature had her Imagination corrupted early in her Youth, either by obscene Tales that were voluntarily told in her Hearing, or by privately listening to the Discourses of the Women, who are too generally corrupt in that Country.

try. Her Head being thus filled with vicious Inclinations, perhaps before she received any Incitements from her Constitution, might prompt her to those vile Practices, which being begun in Folly, were continued through Wickedness ; nor is it at all unreasonable to believe, that, by Degrees, this might occasion a preternatural Change in the animal Spirits, and a Kind of venereal Fury, very remote, and even repugnant to that of her Sex.

Something of the like Kind is reported to have happened many Years ago to a very vicious Woman, in a Country that it is not necessary to name. This Woman was the Wife of an Apothecary, very dissolute in her Manners, and, as some thought, a little distracted in her Head. Her
Husband

Husband bore with her a long Time, out of Respect to her Family, and for the Sake of the Fortune he had with her. But at length she took a Freak of this Kind into her Head, which had very fatal Consequences to an innocent and deserving Person, and which also brought upon the Offender herself a Part at least of that Shame and Punishment which she deserved.

This vile Woman, knowing that her Husband had received a very large Sum of Money, took the Advantage of his Absence, broke open the Place where he kept it, and having got it into her Possession, procured Men's Cloaths, in which she made her Escape. As soon as she found herself in a Place of Security, she provided an Equipage, and assumed the
Name

Name of a young Gentleman who was her Relation, by which, without any Suspicion, she introduced herself into the best Companies, and by a suitable Behaviour, maintained the Cheat for some Time perfectly well; a Thing so much the more practicable, as her's was an Imposture absolutely new and strange.

It fell out, at some Place of public Diversion, that she heard a Gentlewoman, the most famous of her Time for the Sweetness of her Voice, and her admirable Skill in Music, perform a Cantata, accompanied with a Lute. Upon this, it came into her Head to make Love to her, which she did with all the exterior Marks of the warmest Passion. But the Gentlewoman, tho' the Person of this Creature

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was

was far from being disagreeable, had a natural Aversion to her, and could never be brought to have any Liking for her ; tho' neither she, nor any Body else, had the least Suspicion of the Imposture.

Her Friends, however, who looked upon this as a very extraordinary Match, pressed her to lay hold of so favourable an Opportunity of settling herself handsomely in the World, and becoming the Wife of a Person who was able to maintain her in Splendor, and who, from the Name thus impudently assumed, was generally believed to have a great Estate. All the Excuses she could make could not divert her Relations from the Prosecution of this Design ; and at last, tho' with much Reluctance, they so far vanquished

quished her Distaste, as to engage her to accept of this Husband ; and that too in a shorter Time than ought to have been taken in a Matter of such Importance. But they were so afraid that the Family of the young Gentleman, for whom this Woman was taken, should hear of the Matter, and prevent the Marriage, that they hurried it on with an indiscreet Zeal, which they very soon repented.

It was at length, therefore, publicly celebrated, and with great Magnificence ; which is, perhaps, one of the highest Marks of Impudence with which the World was ever acquainted. But, as may be easily believed, the villainous Secret was soon discovered, and the execrable Offender secured. The Noise that this Story made,

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brought

brought the Apothecary to the first Knowledge of what was become of his Wife ; who, after she had undergone such an Examination, as was necessary to render her pretended Marriage, in the Course of a judicial Proceeding, absolutely null and void, was put into his Power, with so much of the Money as remained unsquandered in this wild Adventure,

As for the unfortunate Gentlewoman, who was the Victim of her Friends good Wishes, whose Character was perfectly unspotted, and who was esteemed for her Beauty, and admired for her Virtue, as much as for the Excellency of her Voice, and delicate Hand upon the Lute, she was so deeply affected with the Shame that attended this Affair, which,
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however, brought not the least Imputation upon her, that it threw her into a violent Disorder of Mind, from which a hectic Fever arose, that killed her in a short Time.

As for the Monster who had been the Author of this Misfortune, her Husband very prudently caused her to be confined as a Lunatic; and in that Condition she some Years after breathed her last, to the great Satisfaction of her Spouse, and of her own Family, who thought themselves, in some Measure, dishonoured by her Infamy.

This shews, as well as the Case which occasioned the mentioning of it, that there is an amazing Violence in these vicious Irregularities, which has this happy Consequence, that they
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are quickly betrayed, and in most Countries chastized with that Severity which they deserve ; and, without Doubt, the only Reason that can justify the making Things of this Sort public, is to facilitate their Discovery, and thereby prevent their ill Consequences, which indeed can scarce be prevented any other Way.

It is therefore very expedient, whenever a Treatise of this Kind is committed to the Press, that it should be accompanied with such Reflections as may render it manifest, that it comes abroad with a good Intent, and with a real View of correcting, not a latent Design of corrupting the Morals of Youth ; and, for this Reason, it may not be improper to hint at a few Particulars

ticulars that are extremely worthy of Notice.

The first is, that it behoves People to be highly cautious, as to that Kind of Discourse which they hold in the Presence of very young People of either Sex ; since, tho' it is very easy to foresee that lewd or lax Conversation must have bad Effects, yet it is not altogether so easy to comprehend what very bad Effects may follow from it ; of which this Discourse, and these Remarks, afford sufficient Instances.

In the next Place, it affords (if that were at all necessary) a new Argument for suppressing those scandalous and flagitious Books, that are not only privately but publickly handed about

about for the worst Purposes, as well as Prints and Pictures calculated to inflame the Passions, to banish all Sense of Shame, and to make the World, if possible, more corrupt and profligate than it is already. We are very certain that all Things of this Sort must have a very bad Tendency; but surely it would lay some Kind of Restraint, even upon those who are most forward in these Things, if they considered, that they know not what might be the Consequences, and that they may become inconsiderately the Instruments of much greater Wickedness than they design.

We may add to all this, that from hence may be borrowed a very just Reason for punishing more severely, or at least not making so light of a Practice not altogether uncommon,
which

which is that of Women appearing in public Places in Mens Cloaths ; a Thing that manifests an extreme Assurance, and which may have many ill Consequences, and those too of very different Kinds. This, by the *Mosaic* Law, is considered as a capital Offence, which deserves so much the more Reflection, as it will be found, upon a strict Enquiry, that most of the Laws in that Code, are founded upon the most perfect Knowledge of human Nature. It is also looked upon as a great Crime by our Law, as well for political as moral Reasons ; and therefore it is very strange, that, merely to indulge an idle Whim, or a foolish Humour, the best, or at least the most innocent Reasons that can be suggested for it, this should be looked on with an Eye of Indifference, and rather as a Species of Levity than of Guilt.

To dispense with Laws from Necessity, or for the Sake of some public Convenience, may be excusable, and even reasonable ; but, to suffer such Laws as our Ancestors instituted from the wisest Motives, and for the most salutary Purposes, to fall into Dissuetude, and even Contempt, to gratify the Lovers of Diversions ; in Favour of which, even their best Advocate is able to say no more, than that they are *filly* Diversions, is not a little strange and surprizing, and must give a singular Idea of those Alterations in our Policy and Manners, which have arisen from our Politeness, and our Desire to copy Foreigners in every Thing, not excepting those Follies, of which the wisest People amongst them profess themselves ashamed.

